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Massachusetts & Israeli Organizations Sign Cybersecurity Agreement

*Agreement between MassTech and CyberSpark Will Drive Joint Research, Training,
and Academic Exchanges Between Global Cyber Hubs*

TEL AVIV – During a stop on Governor Charlie Baker’s Economic Development Mission to Israel, economic development leaders took part in the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative and Israel’s [CyberSpark](#), a non-profit private organization focused on the promotion of the unique cybersecurity ecosystem in and around Be’er-Sheva, Israel, which includes a combination of academic, industry, and government resources. The MOU was signed during a lunchtime meeting in Tel Aviv which was attended by CyberSpark’s leadership team and executives from many of the leading cybersecurity firms in the country.

“Massachusetts and Israel each maintain highly skilled workforces, eager investors, and innovative economies that make us natural partners ready to lead on the future of cybersecurity,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “I want to congratulate MassTech Collaborative and CyberSpark on today’s agreement. The Commonwealth looks forward to the shared success your collaboration will bring to development, research, and training related to cybersecurity.”

The memorandum was officially signed by MassTech CEO Tim Connelly and CyberSpark CEO Roni Zehavi on behalf of their organizations and will focus on several

potential key areas of collaboration, including:

- Applied research projects focused on healthcare technology-related cyber issues;
- Roundtables to discuss emerging trends in technology, policy, and regulation;
- Practical trainings for students in the cybersecurity fields in both regions; and
- Visits of delegations consisting of representatives from academia, industry, and the political arena to campuses in both regions.

“We’re excited to kick off our partnership with CyberSpark, so that we can find ways to identify and neutralize emerging threats to these critical systems,” **stated Tim Connelly, CEO of MassTech**. “The focus on cybersecurity in the health care space builds on our work with the Governor on the Massachusetts Digital Health Initiative and it highlights the growing importance of protecting connected technologies such as electronic health records, in-home monitors, and diagnostic tools.”

The signing of the cooperation agreement solidified ties between two regions known for their global leadership in the field of cybersecurity. On Cybersecurity Ventures list of the emerging companies in the field, called the “[Cybersecurity 500](#),” Massachusetts was [represented by 34 companies](#) and [Israel by 26 firms](#). During the event, the collaboration between academic and research institutions in both Massachusetts and Israel was promoted. The Commonwealth is home to 30 cybersecurity degree programs located at 18 universities, colleges, and community colleges; 4 NSA Centers of Excellence; 15 dedicated Security Research Centers; and 13 leading University/Non-Profit research centers.

“We look forward to collaborating with MassTech on the ‘Cybersecurity for Healthcare’ frontier,” **stated Roni Zehavi, CEO of CyberSpark**. “The MOU is an excellent platform to seed and grow joint projects and the exchange of know-how, thus maximizing the proven values and assets available to both CyberSpark and Massachusetts around the venues of technology, research, human capital and regulation.”

CyberSpark was created to advance research and development of cyber solutions in Beer-Sheva, Israel. Prior to his role with CyberSpark, CEO Roni Zehavi spent over a decade as an entrepreneur in the high-tech space, integrating innovative and multidisciplinary technologies into commercial products. An experienced engineer and aviator, Zehavi’s focus on cybersecurity is built on his experiences in aeronautics, 3D applications, and education software.

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About MassTech

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, or MassTech, is an innovative public agency working to enhance economic growth, accelerate technology use and adoption, and harness the value of research by engaging in meaningful collaborations across academia, industry, and government. From improving our health care systems and expanding high-speed internet across the state to fostering emerging industry clusters, MassTech is driving innovation and supporting a vibrant economy across the Commonwealth.

About CyberSpark

CyberSpark is a joint venture of the leading companies in the cyber-security industry in Be'er-Sheva, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Israel National Cyber Bureau (INCB) in the Prime Minister's Office and Beer-Sheva Municipality. Founded by EMC, JVP, BGNegev and Leidos, CyberSpark Industry Initiative is a non-profit organization, designed to be the central coordinating body for joint cyber industry activities with all stakeholders, in order to leverage the region's strengths and maximize its potential. The Initiative is promoting the region and the city of Beer-Sheva as a global cyber center, encouraging joint academia-industry partnerships and supporting the articulation of plans to recruit and develop human resources in the field, as well as incentive plans to draw additional companies, both international or Israeli, to establish projects or base themselves in the region.

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